

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding non-final Office Action mailed February 1, 2007. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and pending claims are respectfully requested.

I. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

A. Rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-13, 21, 22, 24, and 25

Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-13, 21, 22, 24, and 25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Gonsalves, et al.* ("Gonsalves," U.S. Pat. No. 5,839,584) *Perez, et al.* ("Perez," U.S. Pat. No. 6,934,162).

As indicated above, each independent claim has been amended through this Response. In view of those amendments, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections are moot as having been drawn against Applicant's claims in a previous form. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the rejections be withdrawn.

Turning to the merits of the applied references, Applicant notes that neither reference teaches or suggests an external connector panel that is connected to a circuit board so as to form a "pre-assembled single, integrated unit" that can be "installed as single component" in the computer "such that the circuit board and the connector panel are not separately installed in the computer". Although Gonsalves may be described as teaching a circuit board 11 and an external connector panel (leftmost component in Figure 1), there is nothing in the Gonsalves disclosure that indicates that the circuit board and the connector panel form a pre-assembled unit that can be installed as a

single component. Indeed, it appears likely that the circuit board and the connector panel are installed separately.

As a further matter, neither reference teaches or suggests inwardly-facing connection tabs provided on the connector panel that are configured for receipt by slots of a computer chassis to directly connect the connector panel to the computer chassis. Although the Office Action indicates that Gonsalves' connector panel incorporates such tabs, the Office Action did not identify any such tabs with specificity and Applicant cannot discern any such tabs. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the tabs be explicitly identified (e.g., with a marked-up copy of Figure 1) if the rejections are to be maintained in a further Office Action.

B. Rejection of Claims 14-18 and 20

Claims 14-18, and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Gonsalves* in view of *Perez* and *Liu, et al* ("Liu," U.S. Pat. No. 6,000,767).

As indicated above, each independent claim has been amended through this Response. In view of those amendments, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections are moot as having been drawn against Applicant's claims in a previous form. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the rejections be withdrawn.

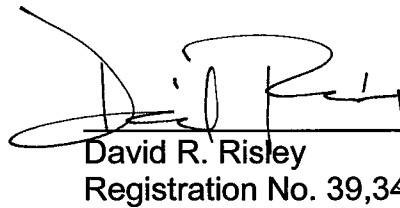
II. Canceled Claims

Claims 2, 6, 8, 9, 13, 19, 20, and 23 have been canceled from the application without prejudice, waiver, or disclaimer. Applicant reserves the right to present these canceled claims, or variants thereof, in continuing applications to be filed subsequently.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,



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